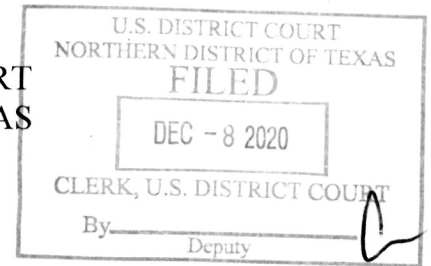


ORIGINAL SEALED

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE NORTHERN DISTRICT OF TEXAS
DALLAS DIVISION



UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

v.

SAMSON KIDANE ASRES (1)
BRANDON MICHAEL BAY (2)
STEPHEN ROBERT ADAMS (3)
TODD STUART BREITLING (4)
CHRISTOPHER WILLIAM FEIL (5)
WILLIAM ERNEST HARTSHORN (6)
BREANNA WELLBORN (7)
JEFFREY WILCOX (8)

CASE NO.

3-20CR0601-M

FILED UNDER SEAL

INDICTMENT

The Grand Jury charges:

Count One

Conspiracy to Commit Identity Theft Crimes
(Violation of 18 U.S.C. § 1028(f) (18 U.S.C. § 1028(a)(1) and (b)(1))

The Conspiracy and its Objects

Beginning in or around November 2018 and continuing through February 2020, in
the Dallas Division of the Northern District of Texas and elsewhere, the defendants:

**Samson Kidane Asres
Brandon Michael Bay
Stephen Robert Adams
Todd Stuart Breitling
Christopher William Feil
William Ernest Hartshorn
Breanna Wellborn
Jeffrey Wilcox**

did knowingly combine, conspire, confederate and agree together, with each other, and

with persons known and unknown to the Grand Jury, to knowingly and without lawful authority produce identification documents, authentication features, or false identification documents, to wit: driver licenses, the production of which was in or affected interstate or foreign commerce.

Manner and Means of the Conspiracy

In order to accomplish the purpose of the conspiracy, the defendants and their coconspirators engaged in the following manner and means:

1. The conspirators, including **Samson Kidane Asres**, fraudulently obtained or purchased the means of identification—including names, dates of birth, driver license numbers and social security numbers—of actual persons.
2. The conspirators, including **Samson Kidane Asres** and **Brandon Michael Bay**, would obtain credit report information from credit agencies in order to learn more about the credit history of the victims.
3. Conspirators who acted as purchasers, such as **Todd Stuart Breitling**, **Christopher William Feil**, **Stephen Robert Adams**, **William Ernest Hartshorn**, **Breanna Welborn**, and **Jeffrey Wilcox** provided **Brandon Michael Bay**, via electronic means, a photograph of themselves in order for **Brandon Michael Bay** to create a false Texas driver license with the image of the conspirator but the personal identifying information of an unknowing, actual person.
4. Conspirators, including **Samson Kidane Asres**, also provided conspirators who acted as purchasers with false utility bills and other pertinent information from the victims credit report that would enable those purchasers to answer the security questions

on the credit check to qualify for large lines of credit at retail stores.

5. Conspirators would then visit certain retail stores within the Northern District of Texas and elsewhere, often those who issued their own lines of credit, to purchase large-ticket items, including cellular phones, cellular phone accessories, wireless speakers, watches, clothing and other items. Conspirators were able to use the false identification documents, including the false Texas driver license, and the victim's identifying information in order to qualify for lines of credit and purchase items with a nominal down payment.

6. Conspirators paid some of these nominal down payments with prepaid debit cards registered in the names of actual persons, but linked to the contact information of

Samson Kidane Asres.

7. **Samson Kidane Asres** paid conspirators who acted as purchasers an agreed sum for every phone that they purchased using the victim's identity. **Samson Kidane Asres** would then sell these phones and use the proceeds to continue to fund this unlawful scheme.

8. The conspirators who acted as purchasers were then permitted to use the counterfeit driver licenses and credit information they had received to make additional purchases at retail stores.

In violation of 18 U.S.C. § 1028(f) (18 U.S.C. § 1028(a)(1) and (b)(1)).

Count Two

Fraud and Related Activity in Connection with Identification Documents;
Aiding and Abetting
(Violation of 18 U.S.C. §§ 1028(a)(3) and 2)

From on or about November 26, 2018 through on or about February 13, 2019, in the Northern District of Texas and elsewhere, the defendant, **Stephen Robert Adams**, aided and abetted by **Brandon Michael Bay** and **Samson Kidane Asres**, did knowingly possess with intent to use unlawfully or transfer unlawfully five or more identification documents, authentication features, or false identification documents, to wit, five or more Texas driver licenses, the possession and use of which was in and affecting interstate commerce.

In violation of 18 U.S.C. §§ 1028(a)(3) and 2, the penalty for which is found at 18 U.S.C. § 1028(b)(2).

Count Three

Fraud and Related Activity in Connection with Identification Documents;
Aiding and Abetting
(Violation of 18 U.S.C. §§ 1028(a)(3) and 2)

From on or about March 11, 2019 through on or about August 24, 2019, in the Northern District of Texas and elsewhere, the defendant, **Todd Stuart Breitling**, aided and abetted by **Brandon Michael Bay** and **Samson Kidane Asres**, did knowingly possess with intent to use unlawfully or transfer unlawfully five or more identification documents, authentication features, or false identification documents, to wit, five or more Texas driver licenses, the possession and use of which was in and affecting interstate commerce.

In violation of 18 U.S.C. §§ 1028(a)(3) and 2, the penalty for which is found at 18 U.S.C. § 1028(b)(2).

Count Four

Fraud and Related Activity in Connection with Identification Documents;
Aiding and Abetting
(Violation of 18 U.S.C. §§ 1028(a)(7) and 2)

On or about November 21, 2019, in the Northern District of Texas and elsewhere, the defendant, **Christopher William Feil**, aided and abetted by **Brandon Michael Bay** and **Samson Kidane Asres**, did knowingly transfer, possess, or use, in or affecting interstate or foreign commerce, without lawful authority, a means of identification of another person, to wit, the name and date of birth of B.J., knowing that means of identification belonged to another actual person, with the intent to commit, or to aid or abet, or in connection with any unlawful activity that constitutes a felony under applicable state or local law, to wit: Fraudulent Use or Possession of Identifying Information in violation of Texas Penal Code § 32.51(b).

In violation of 18 U.S.C. §§ 1028(a)(7) and 2, the penalty for which is found at 18 U.S.C. § 1028(b)(2).

Count Five

Fraud and Related Activity in Connection with Identification Documents;

Aiding and Abetting

(Violation of 18 U.S.C. §§ 1028(a)(7) and 2)

On or about November 10, 2019, in the Northern District of Texas and elsewhere, the defendant, **William Ernest Hartshorn**, aided and abetted by **Brandon Michael Bay** and **Samson Kidane Asres**, did knowingly transfer, possess, or use, in or affecting interstate or foreign commerce, without lawful authority, a means of identification of another person, to wit, the name and date of birth of M.M. with the intent to commit, or to aid or abet, or in connection with any unlawful activity that constitutes a felony under applicable state or local law, to wit: Fraudulent Use or Possession of Identifying Information in violation of Texas Penal Code § 32.51(b).

In violation of 18 U.S.C. §§ 1028(a)(7) and 2, the penalty for which is found at 18 U.S.C. § 1028(b)(2).

Count Six

Fraud and Related Activity in Connection with Identification Documents;

Aiding and Abetting

(Violation of 18 U.S.C. §§ 1028(a)(7) and 2)

On or about December 3, 2019, in the Northern District of Texas and elsewhere, the defendant, **Breanna Wellborn**, aided and abetted by **Brandon Michael Bay** and **Samson Kidane Asres**, did knowingly transfer, possess, or use, in or affecting interstate or foreign commerce, without lawful authority, a means of identification of another person, to wit, the name and date of birth of R.S. with the intent to commit, or to aid or abet, or in connection with any unlawful that constitutes a felony under applicable state or local law, to wit: Fraudulent Use or Possession of Identifying Information in violation of Texas Penal Code § 32.51(b).

In violation of 18 U.S.C. §§ 1028(a)(7) and 2, the penalty for which is found at 18 U.S.C. § 1028(b)(2).

Count Seven

Fraud and Related Activity in Connection with Identification Documents;
Aiding and Abetting
(Violation of 18 U.S.C. §§ 1028(a)(3) and 2)

Beginning on or about October 28, 2019 and continuing through on or about January 20, 2020, in the Northern District of Texas and elsewhere, the defendant, **Jeffrey Wilcox**, aided and abetted by **Brandon Michael Bay** and **Samson Kidane Asres**, did knowingly possess with intent to use unlawfully or transfer unlawfully five or more identification documents, authentication features, or false identification documents, to wit, five or more Texas driver licenses, the possession and use of which was in and affecting interstate commerce.

In violation of 18 U.S.C. §§ 1028(a)(3) and 2, the penalty for which is found at 18 U.S.C. § 1028(b)(2).

Count Eight
Aggravated Identity Theft
(Violation of 18 U.S.C. § 1028A)

On or about March 21, 2019 in the Northern District of Texas, and elsewhere, defendant **Samson Kidane Asres**, did knowingly transfer, possess, and use without lawful authority, the means of identification of J.W., specifically, J.W.'s name, during and in relation to a violation of 18 U.S.C. § 1028(a)(1), knowing that the means of identification belonged to another actual person.

In violation of 18 U.S.C. § 1028A.

Forfeiture Notice

(18 U.S.C. § 981(a)(1)(C) and 18 U.S.C. 1028(b); 18 U.S.C. § 981(a)(2)(B))

Pursuant to 18 U.S.C. § 981(a)(1)(C), 18 U.S.C. § 1028(b), and 18 U.S.C. § 981(a)(2)(B), upon conviction of the offense alleged in Counts One through Eight of the indictment, the defendants

**Samson Kidane Asres
Brandon Michael Bay
Stephen Robert Adams
Todd Stuart Breitling
Christopher William Feil
William Ernest Hartshorn
Breanna Wellborn
Jeffrey Wilcox**

shall forfeit to the United States any property, real or personal, which constitutes or is derived from proceeds traceable to the respective offense, whether directly or indirectly, including the total proceeds derived from the offense (commonly referred to as a “money judgment”).


Pursuant to 21 U.S.C. § 853(p), as incorporated by 18 U.S.C. § 982(b), if any of the above property subject to forfeiture, as a result of any act or omission of the defendant, cannot be located upon the exercise of due diligence; has been transferred or sold to, or deposited with, a third person; has been placed beyond the jurisdiction of the Court; has been substantially diminished in value; or has been commingled with other property which cannot be subdivided without difficulty, it is the intent of the United States of America to seek forfeiture of any other property of the defendant up to the value of the above described property subject to forfeiture.

A TRUE BILL



FOREPERSON

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UNITED STATES ATTORNEY



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THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

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WILLIAM ERNEST HARTSHORN (6)
BREANNA WELLBORN (7)
JEFFREY WILCOX (8)

SEALED INDICTMENT

18 U.S.C. § 1028(f) (18 U.S.C. § 1028(a)(1) and (b)(1))
Conspiracy to Commit Identity Theft Crimes
(Count 1)

18 U.S.C. §§ 1028(a)(3) and 2
Fraud and Related Activity in Connection with Identification Documents;
Aiding and Abetting
(Counts 2, 3, and 7)

18 U.S.C. §§ 1028(a)(7) and 2
Fraud and Related Activity in Connection with Identification Documents;
Aiding and Abetting
(Counts 4, 5, and 6)

18 U.S.C. § 1028A
Aggravated Identity Theft
(Count 8)

18 U.S.C. § 981(a)(1)(C) and 18 U.S.C. 1028(b); 18 U.S.C. § 981(a)(2)(B)
Forfeiture Notice

8 Counts

A true bill rendered



DALLAS

FOREPERSON

Filed in open court this 8 day of December, 2020.

Warrant to be Issued for all Defendants



UNITED STATES MAGISTRATE JUDGE
Magistrate Court Number: 20-MJ-01115-BH